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3.3(h)(2)

3.5(c)

4 March 1955

Copy No. 88

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

DOCUMENT NO. 39
NO CHANGE IN CLASS ☒
☐ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2010
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 8 Jan 80 REVIEWER:

Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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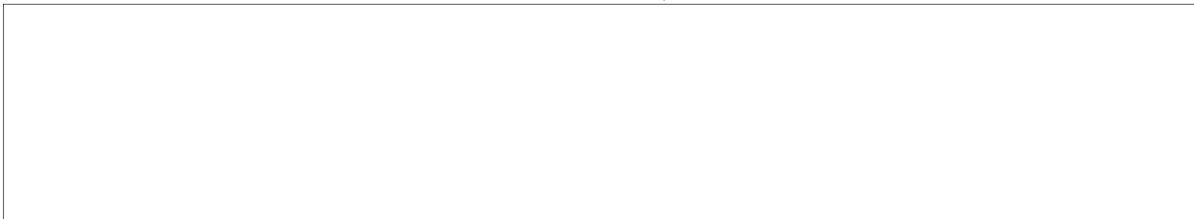
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SOVIET UNION

1. Comments from London on stability of Soviet leadership:

[REDACTED] The American embassy in London reports that observers there, including Foreign Office officials, regard the latest shifts in the Soviet government as further evidence of instability within the top leadership and as having the effect of isolating Malenkov. They believe that there is probably an uneasy balance between the "party machine," presently led by Khrushchev, certain "government forces" and some regular army generals.

The consensus is that the power factor became decisive in the Malenkov-Khrushchev dispute once the issue had been joined over economic policy. Given the ambitious domestic and foreign goals established by the Bolsheviks, the very small ruling group is permanently faced with "deep issues demanding appalling decisions." When there is no all-powerful arbiter and vital issues are involved, these decisions become more difficult to reach. Throughout the history of the Communist Party, stability and unity have been sought mainly through struggle and purge, and there has been an almost inevitable tendency for one man to feel obliged to become the final court of appeal.

Comment: These observations are consistent with a British view expressed in January that a "struggle for power" is inherent in the nature of the Soviet regime. The British expect further instability in the Soviet leadership.

FAR EAST

2. Comment on North Korean measures to deceive armistice inspection teams:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the aircraft may have been

withdrawn from their bases to escape detection by inspection teams of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC).

An inspection of six North Korean airfields was to begin on 1 March following a UN Command charge that North Korea has violated the armistice by introducing jet fighters, which were not operationally based within the country at the time of the cease-fire.

North Korean army [redacted]
[redacted] preparation of measures to conceal military activities in anticipation of impending visits by teams of the NNSC. [redacted]
[redacted]

Such precautions have previously been unnecessary because of rigid controls over movements of inspection teams in North Korea. A relaxation of these controls, initiated to counteract the UN Command's efforts to disband the NNSC, is forcing increased attention to deception and concealment.

3. Withdrawal of two Chinese Communist armies from North Korea indicated:

[redacted]
Over 55,000 Chinese Communist troops left North Korea between 19 and 27 February, [redacted]
[redacted]

If the present rate of redeployment is maintained through 5 March, as is expected, the equivalent of about two Chinese Communist armies will have withdrawn from North Korea in the current movement.

Comment: The withdrawal of two Chinese armies would leave only seven in North Korea, where 19 were stationed at the time of the armistice.

As yet there is no information to indicate the ultimate destination of the departing troops, or whether they will be replaced.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

4. Availability of tanks to Viet Minh confirmed:

Comment:

The date on which the Viet Minh received this materiel from Communist China is not made clear. If the tanks crossed the border after mid-October, they would constitute the first significant shipment of prohibited military materiel noted since that time.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

5. Comment on Iranian attitude toward Middle East defense arrangements:

Iranian officials are extremely cautious about associating Iran with any Middle East defense arrangements,

and adherence to any regional bloc is not likely in the near future.

The Shah has long insisted that Iran would be interested in joining an area defense pact only when its military power has been sufficiently built up. He can be expected to continue to press for greatly expanded American military aid and delay any decision until he obtains it.